

Appl. No. 10/635,118
Amdt. Dated August 25, 2004
Reply to Office Action of May 25, 2004

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed on May 25, 2004, is acknowledged. Applicant requests re-examination of the above-mentioned application in view of the following remarks.

In paragraph 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 7-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 for failing to disclose certain features causing the claims to be indefinite. The Examiner specifically said that it is unclear how the structures of the alignment plate can accommodate the blade terminals.

Applicants respectfully disagree with this view. This structure is perfectly clear from Applicants' Figure 5, where alignment plate 10 is shown receiving terminals 14, 16 and 18. This is also explained in Applicants' specification ¶ No. 27.

The Examiner also objected to claim 15, in that it contains insufficient antecedent basis for "said housing socket." Applicants have amended claim 15 to depend from claim 7. This simultaneously clears up the antecedent biases issue with claim 16.

The Examiner also rejected claims 1-10, 15, 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) on the basis of Hoelscher, et al. The Examiner indicated Hoelscher, et al. discloses that the alignment plate is movable to a position adjacent to the printed circuit board, however Applicants have amended claim 1 to more clearly define the invention. Applicants have amended claims 1 and 17 to include the limitation that the shroud has an open bottom exposing the printed circuit board, with the alignment plate being movable to a position adjacent to the printed circuit board.

Applicants' device as claimed per claims 1 and 17, is different from Hoelscher, et al. Hoelscher, et al has a housing 34 (Fig. 2) having a base 36. This base has a thickness, and the thickness requires extra length to the terminals which extend through the base 36. This provides for the increased possibility of

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stubbing the terminals, but also increases the height of the overall connector system, by at least the thickness of the base 36.

Applicants' shroud has no bottom wall, but rather butts up directly to the printed circuit board. This allows the alignment plate to be exposed to the printed circuit board, and to be positioned adjacent to it, for example as best shown in Figure 6.

The Examiner further rejected claims 7-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Sakuraoka, et al. Like Hoelscher, et al., Sakuraoka, et al. shows a bottom wall to the plug member 14, see bottom wall portion 20, and the associated description in column 4, lines 1-4. Rather, Sakuraoka, et al. shows terminals 12 extending through the bottom wall 14, but does not disclose how or to what they are electrically connected.

As revised, Applicants' 7 recites that the plurality of terminals are mounted in an array and are electrically connected to a printed circuit board. Furthermore, the alignment plate is movable to a position proximate the printed circuit board. In Sakuraoka, et al., the alignment plate is not movable to a position proximate to the printed circuit board, but rather, to a position proximate the bottom wall 14.

Applicants also believe, for the same reasons, and in light of the amendments to claim 17 as recited above, that claim 17 is also novel over Sakuraoka, et al.

For all the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants believe that claims 1-20 are allowable and respectfully request early passage thereof.

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If necessary to effect a timely response, please consider this paper a request for an extension of time, and charge any shortages in fees, or apply any overpayment credits, to Baker & Daniels' Deposit Account No. 02-0387 (72249.90023). However, please do not include the payment of issue fees.

Respectfully submitted,



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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on

August 25, 2004

Date



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